

# FOREST OWNERSHIP AND PARCELIZATION

Who owns forestland strongly influences the condition of forests in Wisconsin. Fifty-seven percent of all forestland in Wisconsin is owned by individual private land owners, while the remaining percentage of forest ownership is owned by counties and municipalities (15%), the federal government (10%), forest industry (7%), the state (5%), private corporations (4%), and tribal lands (2%). Parcelization is the division of parcels of land into smaller pieces among multiple owners. Forest landowners today are not as actively managing their lands, have differing views on how to manage their land, and are purchasing smaller parcels of forestland, which cumulatively lead to the parcelization of forestlands.

## Some Reasons to Plan for Continued Forest Ownership and Reducing Forest Parcelization

- Between 1984 and 1997, the number of Wisconsin's non-industrial private landowners increased by 20% to about 270,000 statewide, raising the importance of ensuring that forest landowners understand their role in actively managing the forests of Wisconsin.
- Wisconsin's forests account for its largest land cover and land use. As such, it is important to plan for the preservation of large blocks of forestland in order to reduce the negative effects of forest parcelization.
- The rise in second homes and non-resident landowners has resulted in more forest owners of smaller parcels of land, increasing the need to ensure that adequate planning measures, such as subdivision regulations, are in place to reduce forest parcelization.

## Tools to Address Forest Ownership and Parcelization Across All Elements of Your Comprehensive Plan

- Provide forest landowners with incentives to encourage the continuation of forests as a major land use.
- Encourage eligible forest landowners to enroll in the Managed Forest Law program and to use a private or public forester to help them develop a sustainable forest management plan.
- Review subdivision regulations to ensure they address or consider the parcelization of forestlands.
- Protect the continuity of forests by working with local organizations to acquire or place conservation easements on forestlands.



For more planning tools go to the  
***Smart Forestry for Smart Growth  
Planner's Toolbox***  
on the web at



<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/SmartForestry>